

---

# How to Make A Confession

THE LIBRARY  
THE CATHEDRAL OF ST. JOHN THE DIVINE  
CATHEDRAL HEIGHTS  
NEW YORK 25, N. Y.



Holy Cross Press, West Park, N. Y.

---

*The Order of the Holy Cross is  
a monastic community for men in  
the Episcopal Church.*

S. P. 20M-7-55

MOST SOULS want the love and joy and peace which comes from Absolution, but they lack practical instruction as to how to prepare themselves. Here is a very simple way in which to get ready.

1. First of all, go to a place where you can be alone for an hour. A Church is the best place. But it is essential that you be quiet and alone with God. For the first few minutes, think about God. Try to realize how much He loves you and the pain He suffered on the Cross in order to redeem you.

2. Now, consider your life. What a failure it has been in many ways; how different from the life of Jesus! Tell Him that you are sorry for your sins and that you are resolved to face them all and make a clean breast of them.

3. Think, now, of some of the chief faults of your life; the sins (some of them, perhaps, way back in your childhood) of which you are especially ashamed. Take a sheet of paper and note down the sins you can recall.

But remember the great difference between temptation and sin. Temptation is the impulse to think, to say, or to do that

which is wrong; but, when you overcome the impulse, there is no sin. A sin is surrender to the impulse.

4. After—but only after—you have noted down all the sins you can recall, it may be a help to you to check up your list by referring to the “Examination of Conscience” which follows. (But get everything noted down on paper, for it will save time for others who may be waiting if you can read the sins off readily in your confession. A form for the latter will be found at the end of this paper.)

5. If possible, state how many times you have committed each sin, or at all events the greater ones. If you cannot remember the number of times, at least say if you have committed the sin often.

## Examination of Conscience

### I. PRIDE

*(This is the root sin; we have all committed it in many ways.)*

Have you loved God as much as you ought to do?

Have you been more interested in self than in God?

Have you made it your chief aim to be always on top?

What have you been vain about; personal appearance, clothes, personality,

possessions, your family, ability, success in games or in studies?

Have you scorned other people for their misfortunes, their sins, stupidity, or other weaknesses? Scorned other people's religion?

Talked too much; called attention to yourself?

Been sorry for yourself, self-pitying?

Refused to admit when you were in the wrong? Refused to apologize?

Been resentful or suspicious of others through over-sensitiveness?

Have you been stubborn and self-willed? In what ways?

### II. IDOLATRY

Have you put another person before God's law; by not going to church, or by committing some other sin to please that person?

Have you wanted popularity so much that you have not said your prayers, or done some other good things, for fear of being laughed at?

Have you loved money or clothes too much; or even sinned to get them?

Gone to mediums or attended “spiritualistic” meetings?

### III. PROFANITY

Have you sworn? (Especially, have you misused the Holy Name of Jesus?)

Have you given way to anxiety, instead of turning to God for help?

Been worried, afraid, allowed yourself to get into a panic?

Allowed yourself to feel that it was impossible even for God to help you?

#### IV. IRREVERENCE

Have you missed Mass on Sunday, when you could have gone?

Have you failed to say your prayers morning and night? or to say them earnestly?

Have you always kept Sunday as it ought to be kept?

Have you done some unnecessary work on Sunday?

Have you always tried hard to worship God when in church? or have you sometimes been irreverent? or joked about holy things?

(Remember that it was not a sin if you honestly forgot to say your prayers. It was only a sin if you neglected it through laziness or fear of being laughed at.)

Have you ever been ashamed of your Religion: ashamed of Jesus?

#### V. DISOBEDIENCE

As a child, were you always as loving and respectful to your father or mother as you ought to have been?

Have you been grateful enough for all that they did for you?

Did you ever disobey them, or others who were over you; or did you ever obey them slowly and reluctantly?

Have your actions ever caused them anxiety or shame?

Have you ever deliberately disobeyed God or ignored His desires for you? In what way?

Have you ever shown disregard for the laws of the Church?

For the laws of the land?

Have you contributed as much as you ought to have done to the support or the happiness of your parents?

What sins have you committed with regard to your wife (husband), children, or other members of your family?

Have you given as much care and attention as possible to the religious life of your family; for example, with regard to Grace at Meals, Family Prayers, Church-going, etc.?

Have you seen that your children had adequate and continuous religious instruction?

Have you been just and generous to people in your employment, or under your authority in business? In what ways have you failed?

Have you tried to dominate the lives of others unduly? How?



## VI. HATE

Have you killed anyone, either in outward deed, or in your heart?

Have you wished that someone was dead?

Have you been angry unjustly? Struck people? or hurt them by ridicule or contempt?

Have you ever cursed people?

Have you gossiped about people?

Is there anyone whom you now hold a grudge against? or are unwilling to forgive? (Think how often God has forgiven you; and ask Him to help you to forgive and love your enemies for His sake.)

Have you refused to help people who were in real need of help? ignored the sick or the poor? not tried to be friendly with people, especially with people who are not very popular?

Have you been afraid to stand up for a person when others were mistreating him?

Have you ever taught (or tempted) another person to sin?

## VII. IMPURITY

(These are the hardest sins to confess, because we are so ashamed of them. But God will give you the courage to show them all plainly, if you ask Him. Do not

be afraid that the Priest will be shocked. He will not be. And remember that it is better not to make your confession at all than knowingly to hide a single sin.)

Have you been impure in thought, word, or deed? (You need not talk much about it, but make it quite plain to the Priest just what kind of sins you mean; whether they were done alone; or with a man or woman; and, if possible, how often.)

Have you looked at evil pictures? or read bad passages in books?

Have you been immodest in actions, or in dress?

Have you been lazy in prayers, work, or study? neglected business, family, or social duties?

Have you ever eaten, drunk, or smoked more than was good for you?

Have you neglected the days of fasting or abstinence?

Broken rules or resolutions which you have made for yourself?

Allowed yourself to be over-engrossed in light reading, the movies, radio, television, or other pastimes, to the exclusion of worth while things?

Have you been cowardly in sickness or pain?

Been unmindful of the suffering of the world?

## VIII. THEFT

Have you ever stolen anything (as a child or more recently)? What things? Have you shared in stolen goods?

Have you cheated in business, games, or lessons?

Have you been over-extravagant; gambled or bet too much?

Tried hard to pay all your debts? Contracted debts unnecessarily?

Have you remembered that God has given you all you have? Have you thanked Him enough? Have you given as much as you ought to the Church or to charities?

Have you been stingy?

Have you wasted time?

## IX. DECEIT

How many lies have you told?

Have you exaggerated too much? Been deceitful, unfair, a hypocrite?

Allowed others to receive blame for your faults?

Been harsh toward others, or in speaking of others, for sins which you also have committed?

## X. DISCONTENT

Have you been jealous of others, because they had more things, or more money; or because they were better looking or more successful; or because someone loves them more than you?

Been grieved at the prosperity or attainments of others?

Been dejected because of the position, talents, or fortune of others?

Have you been glad when they failed, or were in trouble? Glad when you heard people speak ill of them?

Have you allowed yourself to be sad and discouraged at times; and not always fought to be brave and joyful?

Have you tried to accept loss or sorrow or hard things at the Hand of God?

Have you thought that God does not love you?

Have you ever given up trying to be good?



1. After you have noted all your sins that you could remember ask God to forgive you. And promise Him that you will try not to sin again.

2. Do not be afraid lest you have forgotten something. If you have done your best, that is all God asks.

3. Now, ask the Priest (if you have not already done so), when you may come for your confession.

4. Do not be worried if you do not know how to make your confession. The Priest will show you easily.

5. If, when you made your confession before, you ever held back a sin, be sure to tell this in your confession. Then, at last, your heart will be right with God.

## FORM OF CONFESSION

Kneel down, make the sign of the Cross, and say:

Bless me, Father, for I have sinned.

The Priest will bless you.

Then say this:

I confess to God Almighty; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and to you, Father, that I have sinned very much in thought, word and deed, by my fault, by my own fault, by my own most grievous fault.

And especially I remember these sins, since my last confession. . . . [Tell the Priest when you made your last confession unless, of course, this is your first one. Then read the sins you have written on your paper.]

When you have finished reading your sins, say:

For these, and all my other sins, which I can not now remember, I am very sorry, I promise to do better, I beg God to forgive me, and you, Father, to give me penance, advice, and absolution.

Now the Priest will speak to you, and give you God's blessing and forgiveness. He will also tell you some prayer to say, or something to do, as a penance and thank offering to God.

Afterward go back to your place in Church and say the prayer the Priest has given you. Then thank God with all your heart. And go out determined to fight harder than ever before.